

Ruling But Not Governing: The Military and Political Development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey by Steven A. Cook. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007, 189 pp., \$24.95.

There is a long, if thin, line of scholarship on the military's role in political development, and Steven Cook's book adds considerably to it. Building on earlier work by giants such as Morris Janowitz and Samuel Huntington, Cook perceptively examines how the militaries in three Muslim countries—Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey—have cleverly constructed the facades of democracy while exercising considerable political influence behind the scenes. Such “pseudodemocratic” institutions, for Cook, allow the military to insulate itself from public accountability while at the same time exercising its political will. The result is states that are dominated by authoritarian modernizers but that do not actually become military dictatorships.

Cook focuses on the interests that the military hopes to preserve and advance through military “enclaves,” with core interests emphasizing economic autonomy (as the best defense of state as well as a means of personal financial gains), foreign and security policies, and the maintenance of sufficient political cover. This latter objective is critical for the military establishment to achieve its interests without generating enough opposition to erode its power.

Algeria provides the first case, where the creation of pluralist facades allowed for a limited tolerance of political opposition without having to make genuine structural changes in the political order. The risks to that order included the possibility that officers could not always control the emptiness of the facades. Additionally, opposition demands for more liberalization threatened the military's enclaves and, sometimes, its economic interests protected within those enclaves. Islamist demands for accountability and reforms, such as in Islamic banking, threatened the military's privileged position and provided it a pretense to combat the rising Islamist tide in Algeria. Moreover, the Islamist Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) (Islamic Salvation Front) exploited the military's claim to be the protector of Algeria's nationalism, claiming that military corruption was a new form of colonialism.

That intervention came in January 1992, when the military members of the High Security Council dissolved the National Assembly and placed one of their own, Gen Liamine Zeroul, as president. However, as Cook notes, the subsequent defeat of the FIS over a decade-long civil war allowed the military to conclude that it no longer needed direct rule, and it retreated from the political arena. Pres. Abdelaziz Boutiflika, elected in 2004 without military interference, has distanced himself from his armed forces.

The Egyptian political landscape is somewhat similar to that of Algeria—a military-founded political system, marked by early efforts to create a democratic facade, with a centerpiece national assembly. Still, as Cook notes, “It is the military's crucial and intimate association with the presidency that assures the continuity of Egypt's political system” (p. 73). For Egypt's professional military, the purpose for holding to the reins of power behind these democratic veneers

was similar to that of the Algerian military—to advance the cause of Egyptian (and Arab) nationalism along with economic development and social justice. Internally, one of the threats to the military's hold on politics was Islamic extremism. In an ironic twist, a military ally in combating Islamic militancy was the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), the moderate opposition to the regime. Again, as in the Algerian case, the MB's position on economic reform hurt the entrenched economic interests of the soldiers. Nevertheless, hoping that the nonviolent MB might undermine the more radical Islamist groups, the military and the ruling National Democratic Party allowed it limited latitude to criticize the ruling apparatus—generating at best a rhetorical response from the military—according to Cook (though in 2007, the MB suffered a harsh crackdown on its activities by the regime).

The role of the military in the “ruling but not governing” paradigm is challenged most in Turkey, where the election of moderate Islamist governments in the past several decades has brought the military to power either to govern directly or to engineer conditions strong enough to collapse an Islamist regime. The four interventions alone make the strongest arm in the Turkish political climate the military, and its strength is reinforced by the secularist (indeed laicist) separation of religion and state that was initiated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and is upheld by the Turkish military. It was Atatürk and his fellow officers who defended Turkey during World War I and after, establishing a new political order that swept away the ashes of the Ottoman past. They authored the constitutions of 1924, 1960, and 1982, all of which constructed the constrained political sphere aimed at limiting rights for Islamists and Kurds (along with other minorities). The Turkish military held sway in selecting a majority of post-Kemal presidents, and more importantly, according to Cook, “Politicians must ensure that they do nothing to elicit the ire of the military establishment and its collaborators among the state elite” (p. 103). There were advantages to this indirect control: it protected the professionalism of the military and allowed it to play off factions (it could allow some modest Islamist participation in national politics to counter the political left, for example). When that participation grew beyond military-imposed limits, the soldiers cracked down—as they did against the ruling Islamist Refah Party in 1997 when Refah loaded the Turkish bureaucracy, a foundation of military influence, with Islamist sympathizers. Though the military ended the Refah government, the party itself morphed into the Adalet ve Kalkınma (AKP) (Justice and Development Party), winning a majority of seats in the Turkish parliament in November 2002. The AKP-dominated legislature passed a number of measures effectively weakening military political power while at the same time couching those reforms in European Union (EU) language. Thus, the military was caught between its need for influence and its support for Turkish EU membership, forcing it to retreat somewhat from its early stance against Refah. However, the elections of July 2007 (after publication of Cook's book) that enhanced the power of the AKP might cause the professional military elite to adopt a more confrontational stance should AKP-induced policy challenge further their stance and the Kemalist legacy.

Can the United States guide these countries (and others like them) out of these patterns of military power? Cook persuasively argues that the roads taken—development of civil societies and economic development—do not necessarily lead to real, as opposed to facade, democracy. However, positive inducements (military aid tied to real military reform) might reduce military influence somewhat.

Cook might have examined in more detail the enterprise involvement of the military in the three countries he examined. In Egypt, for example, the military has broad involvement in various commercial enterprises, large and small, as Cook briefly notes, that constitute over 30 percent of Egypt's industrial output. Moreover, as Kristina Mani indicates, military involvement in a national economy can make the military even less accountable to civil and political society ("Militaries in Business," *Armed Forces and Society* 33, no. 4 [July 2007]: 592). But this is a minor criticism. Overall, Cook has produced a masterful synopsis of the Oz-like role of the Egyptian, Algerian, and Turkish militaries, ruling behind the facade of political institutions that serve to cover their interests with a democratic veneer.

David S. Sorenson, PhD

Air War College